

the Equinox Magic News



Winter 2007

Volume 1, Issue 3

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SEAM Update

Your 2008 SEAM Committee has been working hard behind the scenes planning for an exciting convention!

While all arrangements have been kept under wraps up until now... you can look forward to exciting announcements (coming soon!) about the talent we are booking for the convention. So far we have a great venue, workshops by four of Ring 9's most talented members, a long list of headliners and lecturers from across America we are currently contacting and contracting, a great dealers room, exciting door prizes, and LOTS of fun surprises!

Be sure to grab your 2008 calendar NOW to mark off August 21st through 23rd as the dates you will definitely attend the SEAM convention. You'll be glad you did!

A Time of Thanks...

We've enjoyed a great year of meetings filled with friendships, camaraderie, informative mini-lectures by our generous members, another exciting auction, lots of amazing magic; and we've hosted several enjoyable lectures.

As we continued the tradition of hosting our Close-Up Contest and Stage Magic Contest, we enjoyed many fine creative performances, and we had the opportunity to honor two of our long-time cherished members by once again naming our annual contest awards after them.

In the midst of elections for next year's officers, and accelerated SEAM Convention planning, we look forward to a magical holiday season (when many of our members enjoy increased work at holiday parties). And we all have our January 12th banquet to look forward to - we hope you will make plans to come out that evening to enjoy dinner, fellowship, and a wonderful magic show with your entire family!

Thanks to all the Ring 9 officers, committee chairpeople, and all the members who so generously donate their time and talents to make our club the fine organization we enjoy today!

Ring 9
The Georgia Magic Club

Impressions

The President's Corner

"I firmly believe that any man's finest hour, the greatest fulfillment of all that he holds dear, is the moment when he has worked his heart out in a good cause and lies exhausted on the field of battle-victorious." - Vince Lombardi

You Are Awesome !

What better words can describe the quality of people who are responsible for another outstanding year of the GA Magic Club? People like Evan and Rob who have tirelessly served the club in so many capacities; Debbie, who has done a magnificent job with the Equinox and overall promotion of the club; Bobby, who is the official photographer of the club; Joe, who has again served us so well with the management of the mini-lectures; Rick, with the website; and David, with the graphic arts work for the club and the S.E.A.M. And of course, all the members who have contributed in so many ways.

You are victorious.

As for me, it was a turbulent year. I tried to do some things differently which caused some controversy. My goal was always to leave with the club and its' members better than when I started. I failed. But, another fine quality of the club is forgiveness and, so many people have been very supportive. I have received many phones calls and email messages filled with kind words of encouragement. Many who didn't see the failure, but respected the effort. To this I say, "Thank you."

Soon, we will have a new slate of officers - now is the time to band together, and serve the club with all our might, to come together as a team, and combine our talents and abilities and make 2008 another awesome year for the Georgia Magic Club.

And remember:

"Respect your fellow human being, treat them fairly, disagree with them honestly, enjoy their friendship, explore your thoughts about one another candidly, work together for a common goal and help one another achieve it." - Bill Bradley

Dale Adamson, President

Thoughts from Mr. Grouchy

Comedy Clutter?

I've been wondering what's up with this Funny Farm that the Georgia Magic Club meets at? I went to a meeting and thought I had walked into a garbage dump! Does the management EVER clean that place up? Imagine if you were a comedian and had been hired to work that joint? Oh...my...gawd!! I think I would wash my money before I ever touched it. It almost makes me want to move the meetings to the back of a Shonee's where REAL magic clubs meet!

Who needs lighting, microphones, and a stage? We don't use them anyway! Instead, the club huddles into a corner and refuses to situate itself to maximize it's use of the facility! You might as well forget about doing a micro-magic effect at this club! No one would ever be able to see it.

I went to a meeting last year, and thought that if everyone sat at the tables in the lower section, a close-up area could be established near the front of the stage and stand-up performers could work on the stage. Everyone would be able to see everything. Overflow attendees and latecomers could "ring" the upper section and visibility would be excellent.

Of course, that would take work, pre-meeting setup, and planning...

Disclaimer: Mr. Grouchy's opinion is his own, and is not supported or endorsed by the Georgia Magic Club, the officers, or the editorial staff of the Equinox!

Kidshow Crowd Control

by Tommy Johns

This is the third in a series of articles for the Equinox that will deal with ways to maximize effectiveness and minimize problems with an audience full of kids. While no one can really “control” kids, there are a lot of tools we can use that will help make us effective as entertainers.

3 - “Say What?”

Once you have set expectations and created an environment that will foster good behavior (some of which was covered in previous editions of the Equinox), you start your show. What tools do you use during the show to get the kids to pay attention and respond appropriately? In a word, words. What words you say and how you say them will make a difference.

Sentence Structure – In the first column, I talked about phrasing your show intro in a positive way, not a negative. Throughout your show, keep this in mind. Saying “I’m looking for a helper who is sitting down, etc.” is far better than, “I can’t pick you if you are jumping up and down.” Also, putting your request at the beginning of a sentence (for instance... “I need a helper who is...”) is far superior to placing it at the end of a sentence (“If you are sitting down, watching the show, you may get to”)

Repetition – New Jersey children’s magician Bruce Bray uses an adaptation of an Al Lampkin running gag to transition between tricks. He “trains” the kids to engage in the following exchange.

Bruce: “Well, that’s the end of that trick.”

Kids: “Awww!”

B: “But, hey! I’ve got another one!”

K: “Hooray!”

This type of repetition keeps kids engaged, and brings them back into the show after every routine. The repetition is made more effective by the audience participation.

Voice Control – The key here is change. As you speak, make your patter interesting by changing your volume, pitch, and tempo. People are hard wired to notice change, and even if their attention has strayed, they pay attention when someone whispers, asks a question (when the pitch of a speakers voice goes up at the end), or when someone shouts. Varying your voice keeps kids focused on you and what you have to say.

BONUS TIP: Know When to Pause – Possibly one of the most effective things to do to regain the attention of an audience is to pause. Teachers do this all the time, but in that circumstance it’s usually done as a form of discipline. They know that when they stop talking and freeze, students will eventually pay attention. Far better, and more fun, is to interrupt yourself with a pause, and grab the kids’ attention without negativity. For example, in my “Go Wild!” school show, I use this technique at a point where the story begins to drag, and it ALWAYS works. I am telling the story of Aesop’s Crow and the pitcher, when I stop (verbally and physically) and say (after about a three-beat pause) as though it just occurred to me “...I know. Let’s do a play.” That pause and change of direction grabs the wandering minds of every kid in the crowd, and I can then move into my next piece.

Controlling or guiding the behavior of kids during your show can be as easy as knowing what to say, and how to say it. Almost like using real “magic words!”

I’d like to get your feedback if these articles are helpful to you, and especially if you have something to add to them. Also, let me know if you have a topic that you’d like for me to cover in a future column, you can e-mail me directly at tommyjohns@magictj.com. A great resource for this column and for you as a performer is Julian Franklin’s “Kid Control: Behavior Management for Children’s Entertainers.”

A Year of Magical Moments

January:

Theme - Time Magic

Winners - Ken Scott & Joe M. Turner (tie)

Mini Lecture - Ken Scott interviews JC Doty

February:

Theme - 21st Century Magic

Winner - Kent Laird

Mini-Lecture - Strolling Magic for Corporate Events with Arthur Atsma

March:

Theme - Magic With Wands

Winner - Carey Huddlestun

April:

CLOSE-UP CONTEST

Mini-Lecture - New Mathematical Principles in Card Magic with Colm Mulcahy

May:

Theme - Holiday Magic

Winner - Evan Reynolds

Mini-Lecture - "Will They Know YOU Tomorrow?" with Ken Scott

June:

Theme - Impromptu Magic

Winner - Wes Petty

Mini-Lecture - Workshop on Coin Magic by Keith Rainey

July:

STAGE CONTEST

August:

Theme - General Magic

Winner - Paul Sponaugle

Mini-Lecture - "The Linking Rings - Fooling More Than Yourself" with Paul Sponaugle

September:

Theme - The ABC's of School Magic

Winners - Bill Packard and Debbie Leifer (tie)

Mini-Lecture - "Handling Unexpected Challenges Onstage" with Debbie Leifer

The Four-Step Program A Torn & Restored Card Routine by Paul Sponaule

Background:

I've long been a fan of Torn & Restored Card effects but always felt that there was no motivation for what I was doing. I've read routine after routine, from the sublime to the ridiculous, but none ever made me feel like actually performing the effect. Sure it's a great effect, but is it entertaining? Here's what I finally settled on. This routine was based on Yves Doumerque's "Ripped and Restored" effect, but can be adjusted to fit any piece-by-piece restoration effect. Here's the routine:

Here's The Routine:

(Appear slightly hesitant...) "Hi, my name is [NAME], and I'm a Cardaholic. My life has been a mess. I've lost my dog, my cat... my family looks at me strangely, okay, they've always done that... and it's been difficult." (This is said while doing card fans, multiple cuts, or just shuffling). "I see a deck of cards, and I just can't help myself, I have to touch them, shuffle them, make them disappear (...back palm, or similar). Luckily, I'm on the road to recovery. I'm now in the 'Four-Card Program'. In fact, I'm in the first week of the program right now." (Look chagrined) "I have to tell you... right now... I'm not even supposed to touch the a deck of cards."

(Hand them the cards.) "Go ahead and mix-up the cards for me, so I won't be touching them. ...and hand me any one card." (After he does so) "I've got it really bad though, even with one card, I find myself acting like it's a full deck." (Fold the card into quarters) "See? Now it looks like a whole, miniature deck (holding the folded card edge-wise to the audience) and I can pretend I'm still holding a whole deck of cards. I can fan them, pretend to shuffle them, and I'm pretty happy." Pause, and then, as if you just realized something, look directly at the spectator and ask, "Would you be my sponsor? ... I'm supposed to have a sponsor at all the meetings I attend. I need you to sign my card so that my counselor knows that I have been following the program." (Have the card signed, and do your get-ready.)

When the card is handed back to you, look at the signature and say, "Hey, you write just like my therapist! In the Four-Step program, I'm not even supposed to hold a WHOLE card." (Start tearing). Even so, I find myself shuffling the PIECES like they're a full deck (shuffle the four pieces in an overhand shuffle - this reinforces that you actually tore the card). "Since I can't seem to stop doing this, I'm only allowed to hold a single piece." (Put the other three 'pieces' in your pocket, keeping track of the second piece. Smile confidently as you hold the single piece.) "My counselor says that if I do okay with this piece, next week I can add another piece, and I'll be halfway to recovery." (Add second piece and do restoration) "That makes me pretty happy, because if that goes well, in another week, I'll be allowed to hold three-quarters of a card!" (Do 3rd piece restoration.) "And pretty soon, I'll be allowed to hold WHOLE CARDS again!" (Do 4th piece restoration and smile broadly.)

I show the full back of the card in the fingertips of the non-dirty hand and say, "That's [spectators] signature on the [card name]!" As I say the card name, I place the card back into the dirty-hand and do a one-handed flip-over move that hides the pieces behind the card and displays the card at the fingertips. This shows BOTH hands OBVIOUSLY empty. I smile at the spectator and say, "My therapist is going to be so proud of me! THANKS for being my sponsor!" Said in a big way with a big smile, using body to signal an applause cue, there should be applause as you hand the card back to your "sponsor" and pick up the borrowed marking pen. All the heat goes to the card and spectator, as you ditch the torn pieces with the marking pen.

[Feel free to pause after each restoration, get applause, smile, and act as if they are applauding because they are "proud of your progress" in the 4 Step Program. The magic can get lost behind a story, so don't be afraid to notice the restoration yourself.]

Ring 9

Monthly Themes

November - "Think A Drink" Liquid Magic

December - "I Knew You'd Say That!"
Mind Reading Magic

Mini-Lectures

November - Bill Packard
"The Seven Wonders Show"

December - David Smith
Magic and Hypnotism

Theme Winners

September - The ABCs of School Magic -
Bill Packard and Debbie Leifer (tie)

Annual Banquet

Saturday, January 12, 2008

Mt. Vernon Presbyterian Church

"An Evening of Parlor Magic in the Round"
featuring:

Debbie Leifer
Keith Rainey
Charles Pecor

Dan Garrett
Joe M. Turner
plus special guests

The Georgia Magic Club meets the 3rd Monday of every month at Startime Comedy Club, 608 Holcomb Bridge Road, Alpharetta.

Guests who are interested in magic are welcome to visit, and apply for membership. All members of the Georgia Magic Club must become members of the International Brotherhood of Magicians.



Communications:

Yahoo Group:

Ring 9 members are invited to participate in our Ring 9 Yahoo Group. We post questions, requests for performing advice, and news.

2007 Officers:

President: Dale Adamson
daledoesmagic@yahoo.com

Vice-President: Rob Speer
speerlaw@bellsouth.net

Secretary/Treasurer: Evan Reynolds
evan@evan.org

To submit material for future issues of Equinox Magic News, please send suggestions, articles, and tricks to the editor, Debbie Leifer at Debbie@MagicDebbie.com